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THE PROPHETIC THOUGHT.

CHILDREN are a prophecy. They contain in themselves the yet unrolled future, and they contain, too, the predisposing causes which give that future its general form and contour, and even its hues and tints. Coming out of one infinity, and going into another, they receive from the Divine Hand the endowments which stamp life with its image. If every one has a character of his own, the mould of that character is born with him, and in him; and he can no more depart from the type than he can throw off his humanity. And if the varieties of character are endless, then, in all their minute and mingling shades, their causes and occasions are innate—as much a part of a man's primal being as are the impulses which determine the colour of his skin, fix the outline of his features, and form and mould his stature. Circumstances are powerful, but theirs is only a secondary influence in human life: they yield to the internal pressure of the soul. They may encroach on the weak, and become masters of the wicked, but it is a usurped dominion they exert—they have no legitimate throne; and for their deposition, it is needful only that the rightful heir should awake to the consciousness of his prerogatives.

Children are a prophecy. Their future they in each case bring with them into the world, as much as the rosebud, the sapling oak, the callow lark.

This prophecy, like others, is difficult to read. Children cannot read their own prophecy—who can read it for them? No one perfectly, very few well, most not at all. In order to read the prophecy, you must know the characters in which it is written. In that book of God every component element of each one's life is written down. But it is a sealed volume, although some transcripts therefrom are imprinted on the infant soul. Who has the eye to discern and the skill to decipher those dim and scattered characters? In them is *The Prophetic Thought* of each one's life. A babe lately struck my attention as it lay in its sister's arms. I believe it was the broad contrast between the two that attracted my eye. The babe itself was very lovely. Of pure Saxon blood, its large light-blue eyes, flaxen hair, and fair oval face, afforded the sweetest sight I had seen for many a day: blood of darker hue flowed in the veins of its nurse, whose face was commonplace, and almost mean. Broad as was the physical contrast between the sisters, yet more diverse was their attire, as well as their general appearance. The infant, clean in its person, was clad in white garments which might have been bleached on the Alps; the girl, with hands and face begrimed in dirt, wore an old woollen dress, in which rags and stains seemed to strive for the mastery.

Attracted by the singularity, I stopped to take a closer view of the two children; when out of the deep liquid ether of the infant's eye issued and glanced away a look which, for a child's look, was full of meaning, and struck me as a prophecy of that child's history. 'Yes,' I said to myself, 'thy future is there; dimly dost thou see it: in no distinct consciousness does it stand before thee, but I discern its general outlines—I know what thou wilt be.'

It is what the infant will be I know, not what it will do. Whom it will marry I know not; where it will dwell I know not; the number of its children I know not: yet I can tell its fortune—I have discovered its prophetic thought. I know, therefore, what will be the great bearing of its life.

Before I attempt to lay down its horoscope, I will explain myself a little as to the nature and efficacy of this prophetic thought, which, as I have intimated, envelops the future of that child, and of every child.

Systems of philosophy have each their prophetic thought. The imaginative which predominates in Plato laid down by anticipation the history of the Platonic philosophy; and in like manner in the common sense of Socrates was the germinating principle of his influence. If you had heard Plato lecture in the Academy, if you had seen the fire of his eye, marked the deep tones of his eloquence, observed how his chest swelled, and his figure became erect, on occasions when he was under the inspiration of a great thought, you would then have known what impression his writings would make on the world—who would be his admirers, who his opponents. Not more certain is the chemist of the result when he puts oxygen and hydrogen together in one vessel, than might you have been that those words would have affinity for men of soaring thoughts, and delicate sensibilities, and refined speculations—with the elements of whose soul they would blend and unite, adding 'fuel to fire,' until, as with a hot iron, they would burn their own likeness on individuals, systems, and institutions.

All great men have their prophetic thought, which is a condensed summary of their lives. The classics were aware of the truth which we are endeavouring to expound. Accordingly they made the infant Hercules strangle a serpent while yet in his cradle, and tell how bees gave sweetness to the infant lips of Plato. Could we see and study the features of illustrious men ere they left their mothers' arms, we should discern their essential qualities, and be able to lay down the chief outline of their history. Those smiles that pass across the countenance of the sleeping babe are sparklings of the heavenly waters of its soul; they are flashes from the past into the future: rending the veil of the inner

temple, they shew things to come in the shadowy light of things that are.

Some illustration and enforcement of our views may be found in the great diversities which children present in the cradle and the nursery, and long before the outward can have had any marked influence on their characters. Of the existence of these diversities every thoughtful mother is well aware. I have myself observed them in great number. Indeed every child may be said to have moral and intellectual qualities peculiar to itself; and so intimately interwoven with the fibres of his being are these qualities, that they make him what he is—forming his disposition, giving expression to his features, and determining even the tones of his voice. Any attempt to classify and describe these idiosyncrasies must fail—so minute as well as numerous are they, and so imperfect an organ is language when it has to speak of spiritual realities. Look round your own family, and you will understand what I cannot set forth. And in your fears for this child, and your hopes for that child, in the choice of a profession which already you have half-made for a son who yet sits on the lowest form in the school, you have divined the prophetic thought of each, and believe in it so firmly that you act under its suggestions.

Would that its mother and its father could discover and respect the prophetic thought of that infant whom I left nestling in its sister's arms! No ordinary history lies in embryo in its bosom. The first germs of that history may have to be sought in the blood of some distant Saxon dame—so linked to the past is our present life; and the remotest branches of that history run out into a futurity which no human being can measure, so close on the infinite does the soul of man press. But who shall estimate the weal and the woe which lie between these two extremes? Who shall say which will be the greater? Intense in that child's case will both be—the joy exquisite, the woe terrible. No, I cannot tell whether she will be an actress, and marry a coronet, or prove a castaway, and perish while yet little more than a girl. But I do know that hers will be no common lot. Her sister may become a kitchen-maid, and marry a chimney-sweep. She herself is both lovely and loving: lovely and loving will she long remain. As she is loving, so will she be loved. Such a soul as hers will burn with affection: some return, a large return it will exact. Will it be a pure return?

I see that sweet child again. No longer innocent, she sits in the corner of a prison, her face towards the door, as if to salute the comer with a look of defiance. As I contemplate her face, the prophetic thought passes in thick shadows over her brow. Once, again, in a thousand times her past determines her future; and force having done its best, or rather its worst, and found no response in a heart which would have answered to the lightest touch of love, she is set on shore in a distant land, and falls a prey to the degradations of a penal colony. Thus a human spirit which might have become an angel has to stand before its Maker in the attributes of a demon.

This paper has its prophetic thought. I have written it because I have a burden for the public. If the man lies folded up in the infant, as the oak in the acorn, then the condition which is first in time is first also in importance. Whence comes our infantine condition? From sources of influence over which we have no immediate control, but also from sources which in process of time we may at least modify. The Saxon blood in that infant's veins came without the will of man; but the will of man may in time to come determine whether more of the Teutonic or more of the Celtic peculiarity shall enter into generations that will be born. To some extent we of this age hold future ages in our hands, for we have an option as to what qualities we will propagate. In these remarks I have confined myself to general qualities—the Saxon and the

Norman. But inborn qualities are very numerous. By nature some persons are melancholy, just as some are scrofulous. The melancholy temperament forebodes sorrow, as much as the scrofulous constitution threatens idiocy: why should the one or the other be transmitted and perpetuated? If allowed, may not the evil gain preponderance, and the race become incurably degraded?

Temperament and constitution ought to be regarded in marriages far more than a pretty face or a large fortune. 'Of good blood?' Yes, I would see my own children marry none but such as are of good blood; but then by blood I do not mean 'men of blood,' warriors of ancient renown, and nobles who have the felicity of knowing the names, and it may be the features, of their grandsons fifty times removed; but by blood I mean 'a good stock,' a healthful and vigorous race, a virtuous and cultivated family. I add the last qualification because, beyond a doubt, moral tendencies of a more or less decided kind are propagated from father to son.

These facts seem to declare that education requires to be enforced, regarded, and cultivated in a new aspect. The education of the race—in plain English, the improvement of the breed in man—demands and must receive attention, else society is now pregnant with a thought prophetic of a fearful doom.

If in our birth we are all big with our future selves, parents at the earliest day should study, learn, and watch the prophetic thought of each of their children. Very soon is there some manifestation thereof. One child will bite and kick, another child will sulk, if interfered with. This child is forgiving, that child is vindictive. See what an affectionate nature shines forth in the eyes and looks of that little girl! That boy has the soul of a braggadocio, and that other possesses the self-denial and generosity of a hero. Do not all these qualities require cultivation? Some may be encouraged, others must be restrained; and others again must be counteracted, overcome—nay, eradicated. A wise parent has now to soften a disposition, now to give firmness and strength to a character. Here restraint is required, there impulse. In all cases proportion and harmony are of great consequence: what is weak should be fostered, what is defective should be supplemented, what is low should be raised, what is gross should be refined; all excess should be pruned away; and head, heart, and soul should be brought into a well-balanced and effective operation. If so high a work is to be accomplished, it must be begun in the very first days of our earthly existence.

REMINISCENCES OF AN ATTORNEY.

THE PUZZLE.

TEMPUS FUUGIT! The space of but a few brief yesterdays seems to have passed since the occurrence of the following out-of-the-way incidents—out-of-the-way even in our profession, fertile as it is in startling experiences; and yet the faithful and unerring tell-tale and monitor, Anno Domini 1851, instructs me that a quarter of a century has nearly slipped by since the first scene in the complicated play of circumstances opened upon me. The date I remember well, for the Tower guns had been proclaiming with their thunder-throats the victory of Navarino but a short time before a clerk announced, 'William Martin, with a message from Major Stewart.'

This William Martin was a rather sorry curiosity in his way. He was now in the service of our old client Major Stewart; and a tall, good-looking fellow enough, spite of a very decided cast in his eyes, which the rascal, when in his cups—no unusual occurrence—declared he had caught from his former masters—Edward Thorneycroft, Esq., an enormously rich and exceedingly yellow East India director; and his son,

Mr Henry Thorneycroft, with whom, until lately transferred to Major Stewart's service, he had lived from infancy—his mother and father having formed part of the elder Thorneycroft's establishment when he was born. He had a notion in his head that he had better blood in his veins than the world supposed, and was excessively fond of aping the gentleman; and this he did, I must say, with the ease and assurance of a stage-player. His name was scarcely out of the clerk's lips when he entered the inner office with a great effort at steadiness and deliberation, closed the door very carefully and importantly, hung his hat with much precision on a brass peg, and then steadying himself by the door-handle, surveyed the situation and myself with staring lack-lustre eyes and infinite gravity. I saw what was the matter.

'You have been in the "Sun," Mr Martin?'

A wink, inexpressible by words, replied to me, and I could see by the motion of the fellow's lips that speech was attempted; but it came so thick that it was several minutes before I made out that he meant to say the British had been knocking the Turks about like bricks, and that he had been patriotically drinking the healths of the said British or bricks.

'Have the goodness, sir, to deliver your message, and then instantly leave the office.'

'Old Tho-o-o-rney,' was the hiccupped reply, 'has smoked the—the plot. Young Thorney's done for. Ma-a-ried in a false name: tra-ansportation—of course.'

'What gibberish is this about old Thorney and young Thorney? Do you not come from Major Stewart?'

'Ye-e-es, that's right: the route's arrived for the old trump: wishes to—to see you.'

'Major Stewart dying! Why you are a more disgraceful scamp than I believed you to be. Send this fellow away,' I added to a clerk who answered my summons. I then hastened off, and was speedily rattling over the stones towards Baker Street, Portman Square, where Major Stewart resided. As I left the office I heard Martin beg the clerk to lead him to the pump previous to sending him off—no doubt for the purpose of sobering himself somewhat previous to reappearing before the major, whose motives for hiring or retaining such a fellow in his modest establishment I could not at all understand.

'You were expected more than an hour ago,' said Dr Hampton, who was just leaving the house. 'The major is now, I fear, incapable of business.'

There was no time for explanation, and I hastily entered the sick-chamber. Major Stewart, though rapidly sinking, recognised me; and in obedience to a gesture from her master the aged, weeping housekeeper left the room. The major's daughter, Rosamond Stewart, had been absent with her aunt, her father's maiden sister, on a visit, I understood, to some friends in Scotland, and had not, I concluded, been made acquainted with the major's illness, which had only assumed a dangerous character a few days previously. The old soldier was dying calmly and painlessly—rather from exhaustion of strength, a general failure of the powers of life, than from any especial disease. A slight flush tinged the mortal pallor of his face as I entered, and the eyes emitted a slightly-reproachful expression.

'It is not more, my dear sir,' I replied softly but eagerly to his look, 'than a quarter of an hour ago that I received your message.'

I do not know whether he comprehended or even distinctly heard what I said, for his feeble but extremely anxious glance was directed whilst I spoke to a large oil-portrait of Rosamond Stewart, suspended over the mantelpiece. The young lady was a splendid, dark-eyed beauty, and of course the pride and darling of her father. Presently wrenching, as it were, his

eyes from the picture, he looked in my face with great earnestness, and bending my ear close to his lips, I heard him feebly and brokenly say, 'A question to ask you, that's all: read—read!' His hand motioned towards a letter which lay open on the bed: I ran it over, and the major's anxiety was at once explained. Rosamond Stewart had, I found, been a short time previously married in Scotland to Henry Thorneycroft, the son of the wealthy East India director. Finding his illness becoming serious, the major had anticipated the time and mode in which the young people had determined to break the intelligence to the irascible father of the bridegroom, and the result was the furious and angry letter in reply which I was perusing. Mr Thorneycroft would never, he declared, recognise the marriage of his undutiful nephew—nephew, not son; for he was, the letter announced, the child of an only sister, whose marriage had also mortally offended Mr Thorneycroft, and had been brought up from infancy as his (Mr Thorneycroft's) son, in order that the hated name of Allerton, to which the boy was alone legally entitled, might never offend his ear. There was something added insinuating of a doubt of the legality of the marriage, in consequence of the misnomer of the bridegroom at the ceremony.

'One question,' muttered the major as I finished the perusal of the letter: 'Is Rosamond's marriage legal?'

'No question about it. How could any one suppose that an involuntary misdescription can affect such a contract?'

'Enough—enough!' he gasped. 'A great load is gone!—the rest is with God. Beloved Rosamond'—The slight whisper was no longer audible; sighs, momentarily becoming fainter and weaker, followed—ceased, and in little more than ten minutes after the last word was spoken life was extinct. I rang the bell, and turned to leave the room, and as I did so surprised Martin on the other side of the bed. He had been listening, screened by the thick damask curtains, and appeared to be a good deal sobered. I made no remark, and proceeded on down stairs. The man followed, and as soon as we had gained the hall said quickly, yet hesitatingly, 'Sir—sir!'

'Well, what have you to say?'

'Nothing very particular, sir. But did I understand you to say just now that it was of no consequence if a man married in a false name?'

'That depends upon circumstances. Why do you ask?'

'Oh, nothing—nothing: only I have heard it's transportation, especially if there's money.'

'Perhaps you are right. Anything else?'

'No,' said he, opening the door: 'that's all—mere curiosity.'

I heard nothing more of the family for some time, except with reference to Major Stewart's personal property, about £4000, bequeathed to his daughter, with a charge thereon of an annuity of £20 a year for Mrs Leslie, the aged housekeeper; the necessary business connected with which we transacted. But about a twelvemonth after the major's death, the marriage of the elder Thorneycroft with a widow of the same name as himself, and a cousin, the paper stated, was announced; and pretty nearly a year and a half subsequent to the appearance of this ominous paragraph, the decease of Mr Henry Thorneycroft at Lausanne in Switzerland, who had left, it was added in the newspaper stock-phrase of journalism, a young widow and two sons to mourn their irreparable loss. Silence again, as far as we were concerned, settled upon the destinies of the descendants of our old military client, till one fine morning a letter from Dr Hampton informed us of the sudden death by apoplexy, a few days previously, of the East India director. Dr Hampton further hinted that he should have occasion to write us again in a day or two, relative to the deceased's

affairs, which, owing to Mr Thornycroft's unconquerable aversion to making a will, had, it was feared, been left in an extremely unsatisfactory state. Dr Hampton had written to us, at the widow's request, in consequence of his having informed her that we had been the professional advisers of Major Stewart, and were in all probability those of his daughter, Mrs Henry Allerton.

We did not quite comprehend the drift of this curious epistle; but although not specially instructed, we determined to at once write to Mrs Rosamond Thornycroft or Allerton, who with her family was still abroad, and in the meantime take such formal steps in her behalf as might appear necessary.

We were not long in doubt as to the motives of the extremely civil application to ourselves on the part of the widow of the East India director. The deceased's wealth had been almost all invested in land, which went, he having died intestate, to his nephew's son, Henry Allerton; and the personals in which the widow would share were consequently of very small amount. Mrs Thornycroft was therefore anxious to propose, through us, a more satisfactory and equitable arrangement. We could of course say nothing till the arrival of Mrs Rosamond Allerton, for which, however, we had only a brief time to wait. There were, we found, no indisposition on that lady's part to act with generosity towards Mr Thornycroft's widow—a showy, vulgarish person, by the way, of about forty years of age—but there was a legal difficulty in the way, in consequence of the heir-at-law being a minor. Mrs Thornycroft became at length terribly incensed, and talked a good deal of angry nonsense about disputing the claim of Henry Allerton's son to the estates, on the ground that his marriage, having been contracted in a wrong name, was null and void. Several annoying paragraphs got in consequence into the Sunday newspapers, and these brought about a terrible disclosure.

About twelve o'clock one day, the Widow Thornycroft bounced unceremoniously into the office, dragging in with her a comely and rather interesting-looking young woman, but of a decidedly rustic complexion and accent, and followed by a grave, middle-aged clergyman. The widow's large eyes sparkled with strong excitement, and her somewhat swarthy features were flushed with hot blood.

'I have brought you,' she burst out abruptly, 'the real Mrs Allerton, and'—

'No, no!' interrupted the young woman, who appeared much agitated—'Thornycroft, not Allerton!'

'I know, child—I know; but that is nothing to the purpose. This young person, Mr Sharp, is, I repeat, the true and lawful Mrs Henry Allerton.'

'Pooh!' I answered; 'do you take us for idiots? This,' I added with some sternness, 'is either a ridiculous misapprehension or an attempt at imposture, and I am very careless which it may be.'

'You are mistaken, sir,' rejoined the clergyman mildly. 'This young woman was certainly married by me at Swindon Church, Wilts, to a gentleman of the name of Henry Thornycroft, who, it appears from the newspapers, confirmed by this lady, was no other than Mr Henry Allerton. This marriage, we find, took place six months previously to that contracted with Rosamond Stewart. I have further to say that this young woman, Maria Emsbury, is a very respectable person, and that her marriage-portion, of a little more than eight hundred pounds, was given to her husband, whom she has only seen thrice since her marriage, to support himself till the death of his reputed father, constantly asserted by him to be imminent.'

'A story very smoothly told, and I have no doubt in your opinion quite satisfactory; but there is one slight matter which I fancy you will find somewhat difficult of proof: I mean the identity of Maria Emsbury's

husband with the son or nephew of the late Mr Thornycroft.'

'He always said he was the son of the rich East Indian, Mr Thornycroft,' said the young woman with a hysterical sob; 'and here,' she added, 'is his picture in his wedding-dress—that of an officer of the Gloucestershire Yeomanry. He gave it me the day before the wedding.'

I almost snatched the portrait. Sure enough it was a miniature of Henry Allerton: there could be no doubt about that.

Mr Flint, who had been busy with some papers, here approached and glanced at the miniature.

I was utterly confounded, and my partner, I saw, was equally dismayed; and no wonder, entertaining as we both did the highest respect and admiration for the high-minded and beautiful daughter of Major Stewart.

The Widow Thornycroft's exultation was exuberant.

'As this only legal marriage,' said she, 'has been blessed with no issue, I am of course, as you must be aware, the legitimate heiress-at-law, as my deceased husband's nearest blood-relative. I shall, however,' she added, 'take care to amply provide for my widowed niece-in-law.'

The young woman made a profound rustic courtesy, and tears of unaffected gratitude, I observed, filled her eyes.

The game was not, however, to be quite so easily surrendered as they appeared to imagine. 'Tut! tut!' exclaimed Mr Flint bluntly: 'this may be mere practice. Who knows how the portrait has been obtained?'

The girl's eyes flashed with honest anger. 'There was no practice about her I felt assured. 'Here are other proofs. My husband's signet-ring, left accidentally, I think, with me, and two letters which I from curiosity took out of his coat-pocket—the day, I am pretty sure it was, after we were married.'

'If this cumulative circumstantial evidence does not convince you, gentlemen,' added the Rev. Mr Wishart, 'I have direct personal testimony to offer. You know Mr Angerstein of Bath?'

'I do.'

'Well, Mr Henry Thornycroft or Allerton was at the time this marriage took place on a visit to that gentleman; and I myself saw the bridegroom, whom I had united a fortnight previously in Swindon church, walking arm-and-arm with Mr Angerstein in Sydney Gardens, Bath. I was at some little distance, but I recognised both distinctly, and bowed. Mr Angerstein returned my salutation, and he recollects the circumstance distinctly. The gentleman walking with him in the uniform of the Gloucestershire Yeomanry was, Mr Angerstein is prepared to depose, Mr Henry Thornycroft or Allerton.'

'You waste time, reverend sir,' said Mr Flint with an affectation of firmness and unconcern he was, I knew, far from feeling. 'We are the attorneys of Mrs Rosamond Allerton, and shall, I daresay, if you push us to it, be able to tear this ingeniously-coloured cobweb of yours to shreds. If you determine on going to law, your solicitor can serve us; we will enter an appearance, and our client will be spared unnecessary annoyance.'

They were about to leave, when, as ill-luck would have it, one of the clerks who, deceived by the momentary silence, and from not having been at home when the unwelcome visitors arrived, believed we were disengaged, opened the door, and admitted Mrs Rosamond Allerton and her aunt, Miss Stewart. Before we could interpose with a word, the Widow Thornycroft burst out with the whole story in a torrent of exultant volubility that it was impossible to check or restrain.

For awhile contemptuous incredulity, indignant scorn, upheld the assailed lady; but as proof after proof was hurled at her, reinforced by the grave soberness of the clergyman and the weeping sympathy of the young

woman, her firmness gave way, and she swooned in her aunt's arms. We should have more peremptorily interfered but for our unfortunate client's deprecatory gestures. She seemed determined to hear the worst at once. Now, however, we had the office cleared of the intruders without much ceremony, and as soon as the horror-stricken lady was sufficiently recovered, she was conducted to her carriage, and after arranging for an early interview on the morrow, was driven off.

I found our interesting, and, I feared, deeply-injured client much recovered from the shock which on the previous day had overwhelmed her; and although exceedingly pale—lustrously so, as polished Parian marble—and still painfully agitated, there was hope, almost confidence, in her eye and tone.

'There is some terrible misapprehension in this frightful affair, Mr Sharp,' she began. 'Henry, my husband, was utterly incapable of a mean or dishonest act, much less of such utter baseness as this of which he is accused. They also say, do they not,' she continued with a smile of haughty contempt, 'that he robbed the young woman of her poor dowry—some eight hundred pounds? A proper story!'

'That, I confess, from what little I knew of Mr Henry Thorneycroft, stamps the whole affair as a fabrication; and yet the Reverend Mr Wishart—a gentleman of high character, I understand—is very positive. The young woman, too, appeared truthful and sincere.'

'Yes; it cannot be denied. Let me say also—for it is best to look at the subject on its darkest side—I find, on looking over my letters, that my husband was staying with Mr Angerstein at the time stated. He was also at that period in the Gloucestershire Yeomanry. I gave William Martin, but the other day, a suit of his regimentals very little the worse for wear.'

'You forget to state, Rosamond,' said Miss Stewart, who was sitting beside her niece, 'that Martin, who was with his young master at Bath, is willing to make oath that no such marriage took place as asserted at Swindon church.'

'That alone would, I fear, my good madam, very little avail. Can I see William Martin?'

'Certainly.' The bell was rung, and the necessary order given.

'This Martin is much changed for the better I hear.'

'O yes, entirely so,' said Miss Stewart. 'He is also exceedingly attached to us all, the children especially; and his grief and anger when informed of what had occurred thoroughly attest his faithfulness and sincerity.'

Martin entered, and was, I thought, somewhat confused by my apparently unexpected presence. A look at his face and head dissipated a half-suspicion that had arisen in both Flint's mind and my own.

I asked him a few questions relative to the sojourn of his master at Bath, and then said: 'I wish you to go with me and see this Maria Ensbury.'

As I spoke, something seemed to attract Martin's attention in the street, and suddenly turning round, his arm swept a silver pastil-stand off the table. He stooped down to gather up the dispersed pastils, and as he did so, said in answer to my request, 'that he had not the slightest objection to do so.'

'That being the case, we will set off at once, as she and her friends are probably at the office by this time. They are desirous of settling the matter off-hand,' I added with a smile, addressing Mrs Allerton, 'and avoiding, if possible, the delays and uncertainties of the law.'

As I anticipated, the formidable trio were with Mr Flint. I introduced Martin, and as I did so watched, with an anxiety I could hardly have given a reason for, the effect of his appearance upon the young woman. I observed nothing. He was evidently an utter stranger to her, although, from the involuntary flush which crossed his features, it occurred to me that he was in

some way an accomplice with his deceased master in the cruel and infamous crime which had, I strongly feared, been perpetrated.

'Was this person present at your marriage?' I asked.

'Certainly not. But I think—now I look at him—that I have seen him somewhere—about Swindon it must have been.'

William Martin mumbled out that he had never been in Swindon; neither, he was sure, had his master.

'What is that?' said the girl looking sharply up, and suddenly colouring: 'What is that?'

Martin, a good deal abashed, again mumbled out his belief that young Mr Thorneycroft, as he was then called, had never been at Swindon.

The indignant scarlet deepened on the young woman's face and temples, and she looked at Martin with fixed attention and surprise. Presently recovering, as if from some vague confusedness of mind, she said: 'What you believe can be no consequence: truth is truth for all that.'

The Rev. Mr Wishart here interposed, remarking that as it was quite apparent we were determined to defend the usurpation by Miss Rosamond Stewart—a lady to be greatly pitied, no doubt—of another's right, it was useless to prolong or renew the interview; and all three took immediate leave. A few minutes afterwards Martin also departed, still vehemently asserting that no such marriage ever took place at Swindon or anywhere else.

No stone, as people say, was left unturned by us, in the hope of discovering some clue that might enable us to unravel the tangled web of coherent, yet, looking at the character of young Mr Allerton, improbable circumstance. We were unsuccessful, and unfortunately many other particulars which came to light but deepened the adverse complexion of the case. Two respectable persons living at Swindon were ready to depose on oath that they had on more than one occasion seen Maria Ensbury's sweetheart with Mr Angerstein at Bath; once especially at the theatre, upon the benefit-night of the great Edmund Kean, who had been playing there for a few nights.

The entire case, fully stated, was ultimately laid by us before eminent counsel—one of whom is now, by the by, a chief-justice—and we were advised that the evidence as set forth by us could not be contended against with any chance of success. This sad result was communicated by me to Mrs Allerton, as she still unwaveringly believed herself to be, and was borne with more constancy and firmness than I had expected. Her faith in her husband's truth and honour was not in the slightest degree shaken by the accumulated proofs. She would not, however, attempt to resist them before a court of law. Something would, she was confident, thereafter come to light that would vindicate the truth, and confiding in our zeal and watchfulness, she, her aunt, and children, would in the meantime shelter themselves from the gaze of the world in their former retreat at Lausanne.

This being the unhappy lady's final determination, I gave the other side notice that we should be ready on a given day to surrender possession of the house and effects in South Audley Street, which the Widow Thorneycroft had given up to her supposed niece-in-law and family on their arrival in England, and to reobtain which, and thereby decide the whole question in dispute, legal proceedings had already been commenced.

On the morning appointed for the purpose—having taken leave of the ladies the day previously—I proceeded to South Audley Street, to formally give up possession, under protest however. The niece and aunt were not yet gone. This, I found, was owing to Martin, who, according to the ladies, was so beside himself with grief and rage that he had been unable to expedite as he ought to have done the packing intrusted

to his care. I was vexed at this, as the Widow Thorneycroft, her *protégée*, and the Rev. Mr Wishart, accompanied by a solicitor, were shortly expected; and it was desirable that a meeting of the antagonistic parties should be avoided. I descended to the lower regions to remonstrate with and hurry Martin, and found, as I feared, that his former evil habits had returned upon him. It was not yet twelve o'clock, and he was already partially intoxicated, and pale, trembling, and nervous from the effects, it was clear to me, of the previous night's debauch.

'Your mistress is grossly deceived in you!' I angrily exclaimed; 'and if my advice were taken, you would be turned out of the house at once without a character. There, don't attempt to bamboozle me with that nonsense; I've seen fellows crying drunk before now.'

He stammered out some broken excuses, to which I very impatiently listened; and so thoroughly muddled did his brain appear, that he either could not or would not comprehend the possibility of Mrs Allerton and her children being turned out of house and home, as he expressed it, and over and over again asked me if nothing could yet be done to prevent it. I was completely disgusted with the fellow, and sharply bidding him hasten his preparations for departure, rejoined the ladies, who were by this time assembled in the back drawing-room, ready shawled and bonneted for their journey. It was a sad sight. Rosamond Stewart's splendid face was shadowed by deep and bitter grief, borne, it is true, with pride and fortitude; but it was easy to see its throbbing pulsations through all the forced calmness of the surface. Her aunt, of a weaker nature, sobbed loudly in the fulness of her grief; and the children, shrinking instinctively in the chilling atmosphere of a great calamity, clung, trembling and half terrified, the eldest especially, to their mother. I did not insult them with phrases of condolence, but turned the conversation, if such it could be called, upon their future home and prospects in Switzerland. Some time had thus elapsed when my combative propensities were suddenly aroused by the loud dash of a carriage to the door, and the peremptory rat-tat-tat which followed. I felt my cheek flame as I said: 'They demand admittance as if in possession of an assured, decided right. It is not yet too late to refuse possession, and take the chances of the law's uncertainty.'

Mrs Allerton shook her head with decisive meaning. 'I could not bear it,' she said in a tone of sorrowful gentleness. 'But I trust we shall not be intruded upon.'

I hurried out of the apartment, and met the triumphant claimants. I explained the cause of the delay, and suggested that Mrs Thorneycroft and her friends could amuse themselves in the garden whilst the solicitor and I ran over the inventory of the chief valuables to be surrendered together.

This was agreed to. A minute or two before the conclusion of this necessary formality, I received a message from the ladies, expressive of a wish to be gone at once, if I would escort them to the hotel; and Martin, who was nowhere to be found, could follow. I hastened to comply with their wishes; and we were just about to issue from the front drawing-room, into which we had passed through the folding-doors, when we were confronted by the widow and her party, who had just reached the landing of the great staircase. We drew back in silence. The mutual confusion into which we were thrown caused a momentary hesitation only, and we were passing on when the butler suddenly appeared.

'A gentleman,' he said, 'an officer, is at the door, who wishes to see a Miss Maria Emsbury, formerly of Swindon.'

I stared at the man, discerned a strange expression in his face, and it glanced across me at the same moment that I had heard no knock at the door.

'See Miss Emsbury!' exclaimed the Widow Thorneycroft, recovering her speech: 'there is no such person here!'

'Pardon me, madam,' I cried, catching eagerly at the interruption, as a drowning man is said to do at a straw: 'this young person was at least Miss Emsbury. Desire the officer to walk up.' The butler vanished instantly, and we all huddled back disorderly into the drawing-room, some one closing the door after us. I felt the grasp of Mrs Allerton's arm tighten convulsively round mine, and her breath I heard came quick and short. I was hardly less agitated myself.

Steps—slow and deliberate steps—were presently heard ascending the stairs, the door opened, and in walked a gentleman in the uniform of a yeomanry officer, whom at the first glance I could have sworn to be the deceased Mr Henry Allerton. A slight exclamation of terror escaped Mrs Allerton, followed by a loud hysterical scream from the Swindon young woman, as she staggered forward towards the stranger, exclaiming: 'Oh merciful God!—my husband!' and then fell, overcome with emotion, in his outstretched arms.

'Yes,' said the Rev. Mr Wishart promptly, 'that is certainly the gentleman I united to Maria Emsbury. What can be the meaning of this scene?'

'Is that sufficient, Mr Sharp?' exclaimed the officer in a voice that removed all doubt.

'Quite, quite,' I shouted—'more than enough!'

'Very well, then,' said William Martin, dashing off his black curling wig, removing his whiskers of the same colour, and giving his own light, but now cropped, head of hair and clean-shaved cheeks to view. 'Now, then, send for the police, and let them transport me: I richly merit it. I married this young woman in a false name; I robbed her of her money, and I deserve the hulks, if anybody ever did.'

You might have heard a pin drop in the apartment whilst the repentant rascal thus spoke; and when he ceased, Mrs Allerton, unable to bear up against the tumultuous emotion which his words excited, sank without breath or sensation upon a sofa. Assistance was summoned; and whilst the as yet imperfectly-informed servants were running from one to another with restoratives, I had leisure to look around. The Widow Thorneycroft, who had dropped into a chair, sat gazing in bewildered dismay upon the stranger, who still held her lately-discovered niece-in-law in his arms; and I could see the hot perspiration which had gathered on her brow run in large drops down the white channels which they traced through the thick rouge of her cheeks. But the reader's fancy will supply the best image of this unexpected and extraordinary scene. I cleared the house of intruders and visitors as speedily as possible, well assured that matters would now adjust themselves without difficulty.

And so it proved. Martin was not sent to the hulks, though no question that he amply deserved a punishment as great as that. The self-sacrifice, as he deemed it, which he at last made, pleaded for him, and so did his pretty-looking wife; and the upshot was, that the mistaken bride's dowry was restored, with something over, and that a tavern was taken for them in Piccadilly—the White Bear I think it was—where they lived comfortably and happily, I have heard, for a considerable time, and having considerably added to their capital, removed to a hotel of a higher grade in the City, where they now reside. It was not at all surprising that the clergyman and others had been deceived. The disguise, and Martin's imitative talent, might have misled persons on their guard, much more men unsuspecting of deception. The cast in the eyes, as well as a general resemblance of features, also of course greatly aided the imposture.

Of Mrs Rosamond Allerton, I have only to say, for it is all I know, that she is rich, unwedded, and still splendidly beautiful, though of course somewhat *passée*

compared with herself twenty years since. Happy, too, I have no doubt she is, judging from the placid brightness of her aspect the last time I saw her beneath the transept of the Crystal Palace, on the occasion of its opening by the Queen. I remember wondering at the time if she often recalled to mind the passage in her life which I have here recorded.

NON-TELESCOPIC VIEW OF THE ECLIPSE.

A COMPLETE eclipse of the sun is a very exciting event for the astronomers; but there are others who take as great an interest in knowing how the earth and its denizens behave themselves under the dispensation. Of such is Mr Robert Chambers, who has sent from Gottenburg in Sweden to the 'Edinburgh Evening Courant' a non-astronomical view of the scene, which we are in hopes may be satisfactory to many of our readers. We all know how unphilosophically the lower animals are said to have conducted themselves on the last occasion of the kind—the oxen, for instance, forming into a circle in the middle of a field with their horns outwards, as if they had believed with the Chinese that Eclipse was a monster in the act of swallowing the sun. It is pleasant to think that these animals have ruminated to some purpose since then, and that at Gottenburg they went coolly on with their dinner during the progress of the phenomenon. We wish we could say as much for the diffusion of enlightenment among their human masters; but we must let our friend tell the story in his own words.

The intrusion of the non-scientific being deprecated by all the philosophic observers, I resolved to head what I called a Zoological Section, to be placed in some convenient spot where the general effect might be well seen, and where we should have opportunities of watching the conduct of the lower animals during the progress of the phenomenon. We found a suitable place in the fertile island opposite to Klippen, about three miles from Gottenburg, an eminence about a hundred feet above the sea, where cattle, horses, pigs, and geese were feeding. Here we took our station at two o'clock. Besides hand-telescopes and lorgnettes, with slips of dimmed glass, we had no philosophical instruments except a thermometer to determine any change of temperature which might take place, and a compass to ascertain the meridian line, with a view to our use of a small chart of the position of the stars and planets with which Mr Swan had furnished us. There being few loftier eminences near Gottenburg, we had here a tolerably full view of the sky in all directions.

At about five minutes to three o'clock, which had been calculated as the local time for the commencement of the eclipse, we detected the first intrusion of the moon's body upon the western limb of the sun, and from that time an extraordinary excitement prevailed in our party. The dulling of the daylight was soon detected. Then the wind, which blew briskly, was felt to be chilly. Glasses were handed from one to another, that each person might have an opportunity of trying all. Remarks on the amount of the sun's body obscured, on his appearance as he gradually assumed a crescent form, and on the slightly-ragged character of the edge of the moon, passed between us. I kept a good watch upon the animals round about; but cows, pigs, horses, and geese all alike continued to feed, as if nothing unusual were impending. In the midst of my anxiety on this subject, the neighbouring farmer sent boys to drive home his cows, thinking that they would be safer there, and, notwithstanding our remonstrances, we lost the attendance of those ruminants. After all, they were left out close to the house, and a lady was good enough to take her station there to observe them.

It may be readily imagined that as the moment of total obscuration approached the excitement waxed in

intensity. It was indeed scarcely possible at that time to maintain anything like coolness, so anxious were we all to make the best use of the short time which we knew was to be allowed to us. A great dulness had now taken possession of the landscape, and settled in ghastly fashion upon every upturned countenance. Yet, while even a very thin slip of the sun's body remained out he maintained a very considerable brightness, and the sky in that quarter was full of light. The degree of illumination over the face of the country seemed to me much the same as that which prevailed during the annular eclipse of 1836. It was a good twilight, but of a very peculiar hue, and shedding a sort of horror over external nature, instead of the usual soft shades of evening. On the whole, however, there was less darkness up to this time than might have been anticipated. I could almost say that the change of the temperature was more intrusive upon our observation. The thermometer had sunk from 67° to 59° Fahrenheit, and the ladies had all found it necessary to invest themselves in shawls and cloaks.

The last thing which I remember observing just before the sun was wholly covered, was the deep gloom of the sky in the north-west—a frown like that which heralds the most dreadful storm. The moment of the totality was a striking one, for the transition from the considerable light described to that very much reduced amount which attended complete obscuration, was extremely abrupt.

'At one stride comes the dark.'

We suddenly found ourselves able to look at the sun (so to speak) with the naked eye. There we were, gazing fearfully on the wondrous object in the western sky, while exclamations of wonder and awe burst confusedly from every lip. It was, as it were, a black sun with the usual corona of radiation flaming around it; but only for a short space, and the colour changed to a blue livid tint. Some were eager at this moment to detect the stars, others to observe the conduct of the animals; but in the fluttering horror of the scene, and the intense solicitude about the brevity of the opportunity, less was done than we could have wished. We readily found Venus, which was a little way below the sun, to the right; but I vainly looked for Mercury equidistant in the opposite direction. Jupiter presented himself near the meridian, and some one was convinced he saw a star, which I think must have been Alphureit, in an intermediate position. Meanwhile our flock of geese went off homewards, flapping their wings, and our host's watch-dog ran away in a strangely excited state. Some one observed a canary, which had been brought to the hill, resting at the bottom of its cage, with its head under its wing. Another found the wild bees beginning to cluster about a spot near us, where their nest was supposed to be. The cattle, however, and the horses and pigs, continued to feed, as if nothing had been the matter. I had no opportunity of observing any birds; but the lady who attended to the cows saw some chickens leaping in a singular manner in the farm-yard, and she heard the cocks crow several times.

Although Gottenburg was only a few miles from the centre of the shadow, I cannot say that the darkness nearly amounted to that of a moonless night. I suppose that diffraction theoretically forbids our looking for perfect darkness—the light from beyond the shadow pressing in to some degree all round. Nevertheless, by a natural exaggeration, even scientific observers have spoken of the totality as a transient night-time. My report would be, that the darkness is very great, to be a thing occurring during the day, and words cannot convey a sense of the impression it makes on the beholders; but it certainly is far from being comparable, in point of obscurity, to true night. Our seeing only two planets and one star throughout the whole sky seems sufficient proof of this.

It was interesting to observe the rapid changes of the sky during the passage of the shadow. First there was the gloomy north-west, as the shadow came on; and at the same time an evening-like glow of amber light in the opposite quarter. Then the gloom gradually shifted to the south-east, and a kind of dawn began in the quarter which had before shewn so terrible a frown. If I were not afraid of being fanciful, I could almost say I saw the shadow pass in the air over our heads; nay, could almost say I heard it, for at such a moment one can hardly tell by what sense it is that he becomes conscious of what is going on.

At length the too short three-and-a-half minutes having passed, a piercing illumination broke out, apparently from a single point, in the eastern limb of the obscured body, and we felt that all was over. There was now nothing new to occur, for of course the clearing of the sun was just a reversal of the process of his obscuration. Our party, therefore, instantly proceeded to act as if the eclipse were at an end, gathering up their instruments and other articles, and preparing to move homewards. Though it was still a kind of dusk, we felt that the ordinary world was restored to us.

I am glad to learn to-day that at least one of our scientific observers has been fortunate enough to observe those rose-coloured prominences, from the obscured body of the sun, which have been observed on several former occasions, but are hitherto matter of considerable doubt. It is probable that some progress will now be made towards the clearing up of that mystery.

We have had a great deal of amusement in hearing of the manner in which this eclipse was regarded beforehand by the ignorant people of this country. A general sense of alarm was felt amongst the peasantry for several weeks, inasmuch that in some places agricultural operations were suspended, or very imperfectly performed. A clergyman of the neighbourhood, the Dr — of Sweden, preached that the world was coming to an end, and that he would undertake to maintain all who should survive the eclipse. Yesterday it was found that some things sent out to be washed could not be got ready, by reason of the terrors under which the *blanchisseuse* was suffering. The daughter of our friend's cook came here in the morning, that she and her mother might perish together; while another daughter, unable to get leave from her mistress, bitterly bewailed her being debarred the same privilege. Another notion was, that the language of the people would be changed by the eclipse. I rather think there is a kind of ill-will felt towards us English, as if we had come the other day by the *Courier* on purpose to *make the eclipse*. The clustering of groups in the streets, and their expressions of astonishment and terror, would, I am told, have formed a by no means unsuitable study for the Zoological Section. The low state of Sweden in point of education, and the natural effects of such a phenomenon upon the unenlightened mind, are thus strongly brought before us.

SAM SUNDRIES AND HIS CONGENERS.

SAM SUNDRIES—to give him the name by which he is universally known among his neighbours—lives in the Bagnigge Wells Road. He keeps a shop, the physiognomy of which, being of a very unpretentious, bottle-blue colour, is anything but prepossessing. Bottles of every known form of configuration, with their concave bottoms uniformly ranged against every pane, fill up the entire window; and the very little light which can succeed in struggling through the prostrate files, reveals to you within a succession of shelves, range above range, still covered with bottles, among which, however, you may discern whole rows of pickling-jars, preserve and jelly-pots, and every species of crockery and corkable glass applicable to the business of the

dispensing-room or the kitchen. Bottles, however, are but a small part of his wares—the ostensible head and front of his commercial speculations. The whole domain of Sam Sundries is a warehouse or storeyard, crammed to excess with the *disjecta membra* of past realities. Bricks, pantiles, slates, chimney-pots, wainscottings, doors, windows, shop-fronts, sashes, counters, blocks of stone, bars of metal, rolls of lead, iron-railings, gateways, stoves, knockers, scrapers, pipes and funnels, copper pots, pans, and boilers, and everything which has a name or a use, and many things which have neither, are stored in rich and rusty abundance in the ample yards and sheds in the rear of his residence. He will buy anything and everything which the regular dealers have rejected—from the roof of an old house to its rotten kitchen-floor, and from the wardrobe of the master to the perquisite bones and grease of the scullion-wench. Besides a good connection among the medical practitioners of his district, whom he supplies with phials at a fraction under the market-price, he has intimate relations with Monmouth Street and Rag Fair—the denizens of which localities clear off his collections of 'toggerie' at their periodical visits. His *dépôt* is the daily resort of little speculating builders and repairers; and he reaps a considerable profit by the ready sale to cheap contractors of an infinite variety of materials which it is possible to work up again in the construction of a new edifice. He has a standing agreement with the artists' colourmen, to whom he scrupulously transfers all the old and well-seasoned oak and mahogany panelling that comes in his way, and by whom it is scientifically primed and prepared for the artists' use.

He is, moreover, a builder in a small way himself. In this department he is what the Americans would call a smart man. Having a sharp eye for prospective advantages, he is often unexpectedly discovered to be the proprietor of a little square patch of land lying directly in the track of a new suburban street, where he has run up a wooden hut, tenanted by an Irish labourer, and which has to be purchased at a swingeing price before the new buildings can be completed. He has a dozen or two of nondescript cottages—queer-looking compilations of old bricks and older timber, perched upon 'spec.' in the precise path of the advancing improvements in different quarters. He constitutes himself not the pioneer, but the stumbling-block in the march of civilisation. He is part and parcel of the rubbish which has to be moved out of the way. His erections are built up to be pulled down—the sooner the better for him; but his speculations of this nature have a disastrous effect upon the public, through the introduction of vermin not to be named into new buildings—his colonised old bricks being invariably worked up in the party-walls, probably to save the trouble and expense of carting them away. Though possessed of a vast amount of a rather equivocal description of property, Sam has but little ready money at his command; and the reason is, that much of what is refuse in other men's eyes is treasure in his, and he constantly converts his cash into stock, being tempted by the famous bargains which in his line of business are always to be had. With a floating capital of some 'seven pun' ten, he considers himself well furnished for the market; and if any sudden emergency necessitates a greater outlay, he gives his bill, and honours it duly when presented.

Arrived at your dwelling in the pursuit of his vocation—on the eve of the removal-day, we shall say, when you are in a hopeless smotherment with rubbish of all kinds—it is astonishing to witness the ease and celerity with which he sorts, arranges, and values the heterogeneous mass you are anxious to get rid of. He gets through a gross of bottles in a few minutes, rejecting the starred culprits almost instinctively, and, ranking the sound ones in rows, licks them off at so

much per dozen. Boots, shoes, boxes, hampers, old hats, old clothes, old books and papers, deal-boards, and abandoned utensils of every sort, are all despatched with equal celerity; and having informed you that 'thirty bob is his money for the whole bilin'—take 'em or leave 'em'—a sentence, by the way, from which you could no more move him than you could transplant Niagara to Spitalfields—he politely insinuates that he will, if it is any accommodation to you, remove the broken glass into the bargain, which, as he is known to deal very largely in that material, is not greatly to be wondered at.

Sam Sundries is considered a substantial tradesman, and 'warm man' by his compeers in his immediate neighbourhood, and piques himself not a little upon that respectability, which, having achieved for himself, he proudly regards as his most valuable possession. Though he and his whole family live up to the eyes in lumber of every imaginable sort, and may be seen of a hot summer day dining together from a pound of apocryphal sausages, forked out of the frying-pan and caught upon a hunch of bread, yet the pride of independence gleams in every eye, from the young bottle-imp who rattles shot in oily phials the livelong day, to the indefatigable mother of the seven Sundries, who to the care of her numerous family adds the service of the shop. Sam has a host of imitators in the various districts in and around London, of the majority of whom it may be said that, lacking his spirit of speculation and his command of a species of natural arithmetic, which together have been the foundation of his success—for he is utterly devoid of education—they cut but a sorry figure upon small and uncertain gains. Their shops abound in the neighbourhood of Saffron Hill and the Cowgate, and in the whole of the back-way track that leads from Liquorpond Street westward, and in a hundred similar localities besides. Many of them are professedly brokers; but the last page of the auctioneer's catalogue is their *vade-mecum*; and they may be seen straggling into the saleroom at the termination of the day's business, when the regular professional brokers are leaving, with the view of monopolising the few last lots of sundries at their own price. In this laudable purpose, however, they are often defeated by the presence of one or more sturdy old dowager cook or house-keeper, or owner of a lodging-house, who having sat doggedly through the whole sale without bidding, elevates her sonorous voice at last in favour of the entire shoal of pots, pipkins, pans, and pickle-jars, which are knocked down to her at their full value, to the rage and consternation of her grim and aggravated rivals.

As the current of business does not flow very briskly in the narrow, tortuous, and poverty-stricken thoroughfares where necessity has compelled these dealers in odds-and-ends to locate their shops, they find themselves compelled to sally forth in pursuit of that traffic which in some shape or other is indispensable to their existence. Having no very profound or scrupulous convictions on the score of morality to contend with, their invention and ingenuity have free scope; and many and various are the machinations and contrivances by which they manage to recommend their services to certain sections of the public. A small hand-bill, not four inches square—both paper and print being of the last-dying-speech-and-confession quality—is lying upon our desk as we write. It was picked up in the area, where it had been dropped for the special information of the servant-girl; and it instructs all whom it may concern, and female domestics in particular, that John G—, of — Lane, Clerkenwell, 'gives the best price for bones, bottles, rags, and kitchen-stuff, all sorts of wearing-apparel, china, glass, and every description of property whatever, *without trouble or inconvenience*'; and further, that the said John G— 'may be relied upon in all circum-

stances.' Another, issued by a member of the same fraternity, copies of which are plentifully circulated at the approach of every recurring quarter-day, and which is palpably intended for the grave consideration of 'heads of houses' who may be contemplating a march by moonlight, enlarges upon the immense convenience proffered by Ezra L—, 'who has money at command to any amount for the especial accommodation of his friends, and who will take charge of their securities, of whatever kind, at any hour—advancing the needful sum before removal.' These disinterested announcements, there can be little doubt, procure them favour and encouragement from certain sections of the community, and may go far to account for the abnormal increase in the amount of tradesmen's bills, so mysterious to unsophisticated housekeepers; and also for the sudden abandonment and dismantling of many a well-furnished house, to the alarm and consternation of the defrauded landlord. But these are bold speculations, contrived and carried into execution by the choice spirits of the class—the underhand Napoleons of industry—and are far above the genius and enterprise of the great majority. Honesty is a policy with some, who to their profession as general dealers add the exercise of some useful craft, which, when there is no demand for it at home, they carry forth into the suburbs, lifting up their voices in the streets, or making application at the doors and areas. Thus if your parlour-window has a broken pane, and you do not immediately send for the glazier, it is odds but one of these travelling professionals knocks at your door, and offers to do the necessary repairs at five-and-twenty per cent. less than the trade-price; which, having consented to, you find, from the quality of the glass he has inserted, is no bargain after all. Others mend cane-chairs, and will weave a new seat in the course of an hour and a half, at the charge of ninepence, including the materials. Some are unlicensed hawkers of china and glass; but they evade the penalty pronounced by the act of parliament by refusing to take money for their goods, which they barter for any species of domestic refuse or cast-off apparel. Of these there are a very numerous class who perambulate periodically a regular beat, and who keep up an extensive connection in the prosecution of this kind of barter. Not a few of them are assisted by their wives, who divide the labour with them, taking alternate journeys. The co-operation of the wife is found of considerable advantage in the department of trade, as by her means a greater degree of familiarity with the patrons of this kind of commerce, who are invariably females, is established than could ever be accomplished by the cajoleries of the husband alone. When he starts out upon his expedition, he carries a large basket on his head and a capacious sack slung upon his shoulders. He takes his silent way along the accustomed track, never opening his lips in public, but calling privately upon his several patrons. 'Anything in my way to-day, marm?' is his modest appeal. If a negative is returned, he loses no time, but vanishes at once. Should, however, the slightest symptom of hesitation be manifested, down drops the basket upon the door-step, and the glittering display of glasses, cruets, bowls, basins, jugs, and dishes, soon operates a decisive effect. The contents of his basket are gradually exchanged for the exuvie of the various members of the several families on his list, or for such household requisites of a portable description, which with him comprises a wide range, as long service has divested of their original integrity and respectability of appearance—all which go into the bag, very much, there is scarcely reason to remark, to the advantage of the peripatetic dealer, who, in reverting to the elementary practices of commerce, becomes necessarily from his position his own appraiser and umpire. The wares he carries about with him for disposal are uniformly the defective and rejected productions of the potteries and glass-houses,

and are purchased in large quantities, at a very low rate, for this peculiar description of trade.

Sometimes a brace of speculators in sundries will ally forth together on what is technically termed the 'pick-up.' Their object is to buy—no matter what—with a view to a round profit. One of their favourite plans is to call at every open door, professing to give a high price for bottles and old clothes. The farther they get from Bow Bells the more liberal become their offers, until when fairly out in the country, they boldly offer three shillings a dozen for bottles which your wine-merchant sells you for two. But, in fact, bottles they don't want; and, what is more than that, bottles they won't have. The following scene, detailed by an eyewitness, exemplifies their *modus operandi* :—

Scene—A Wayside Farm. Enter Two Tramps with Sacks on their Shoulders.

First Tramp. Yah, yah! Now, ladies, bring out your bottles and old clo'es! Three shillins a dozen for bottles; now 's your time! Bring out your old clo'es! Three shillins a dozen—bottles, ho! bottles! bottle—ottle—ottle—ottle—ottles [*With a gurgling noise like the eruption of double-stout from an uncorked bottle of Guinness.*]

Second Tramp. Yah—ah—ah! Now for the old hats and bonnets! Never mind the dust! Now for the old coats and gownds, pangtyloons and gayters—hainy-think! Rummage 'em out—now 's your time, ladies!

Farmer's Wife. (*Calling from the casement.*) Here, come in my good man; I've got a mort o' bottles.

Scene changes to Farm-house Kitchen. The Goodwife drags forth a couple of dozen of Black Bottles, and ranks them on the Floor.

First Tramp. Now, look alive, Ned. Go over them there bottles while I looks at the togger. Where's the old clo'es, marm?

Farmer's Wife. Clothes! I got no clothes to sell as I know of; I haven't a sed nothin' about no clothes.

First Tramp. I daresay you can look up a few, marm. Can't buy all bottles and no clo'es: must be some o' both sorts, marm. Bottles is very well, but must be some clo'es.

Farmer's Wife. Well, let me see; there be an old coat I do think my maister ha' done wi': I'll go and see. Setty down a minnit. [*Exit, and returns in a few minutes with a coat and pair of pantaloons.*] Here be a coat and trousers; what be 'e gwin to gimmy for they?—they baint very hard done by you see.

First Tramp. Let 's have a look at 'em. Come, I'll give you a shillin for the two—eightpence for the coat and fourpence for the pants.

Farmer's Wife. Eightpence for theas coat! Whoy, a's wuth a half-crown, anybody's money!

First Tramp. Lor' love your 'ansome face! How d'ye think I can give half-a-crown for that there coat when I'm a goin to give three shillin a dozen for bottles?—'taint in reason!

Second Tramp. (*In an audible whisper.*) These is thundrin' good bottles, Bill!

Farmer's Wife. Well, let me see; that 'll make seven shillings altogether. Well, well, I s'pose you must have 'em.

First Tramp. Here, Ned, clap them togs in the bag. I may as well pay you for 'em at once, marm. [*Pays her a shilling, while Ned sacks the clothes.*]

Farmer's Wife. But the bottles? B'aint ee gwin to pay for the bottles?

First Tramp. Oh, sartinly, marm. But you see, lor' love you! we don't car bottles in a bag: we must go and fetch a hamper for them. We 'll pay of course when we fetches 'em away. [*Exeunt Tramps—manet Farmer's Wife in a cloud.*]

The good woman keeps the bottles waiting for the hamper so long as she has any faith in its arrival, but as that consummation is delayed from hour to hour,

she at length comes by degrees to appreciate the true nature of the transaction.

The modes of cheating are as various as those of getting a livelihood. The above is but one sample out of thousands of the manner in which the simple are daily mystified by the sharp-witted knaves of the metropolis.

With the exception of some few successful examples who, like Sam Sundries, have got the world under their feet, the dealers of this class occupy a position midway between the keepers of rag-shops, who beneath the auspices of a black doll suspended aloft over the doorway, keep open-house for the reception of bones, rags, and grease, and those connoisseurs in mahogany and French polish—the furniture-brokers. They carry on a branch of commerce which the necessities of a numerous section of society have called into being. In their dark and dingy shops and sheds the poor labourer and the scantily-paid artisan finds, at a price commensurate with his means, the various utensils and appliances of such humble housekeeping as he can afford to maintain; and but for some such a market as their obscure depositories supply, thousands of our fellow-creatures would be reduced to shift without the domestic conveniences of life. It is their task to rescue from the fire and the axe, and from the very jaws of destruction, the worn-out and abandoned implements of housewifery and comfort contemptuously cast forth from the dwellings of the upper and middle classes, and to reft and re-establish them for the accommodation of the very poor. In the exercise of this vocation they are found to manifest a degree of ingenuity and perseverance worthy of a better reward than it sometimes obtains, seeing that the parties with whom they have mostly to do are even more indigent than themselves. That as a class they are frequently brought into very intimate relations with the police force, and find their wanderings confined for a season to the limited area of a prison cell, does not invalidate the fact, that there are among them many honest and worthy individuals, to whom the world is indebted for much painstaking and ill-requited labour.

BROADSIDES.

THIS is not an article on naval warfare. Our broadsides are merely those sheets of paper printed on one side, that they may be pasted for public perusal on a wall or some conspicuous place. They are otherwise called placards, and the French call them *affiches*, on account of their being so fixed. The term broadsides is one of late use in the bibliographical world, where it has become a passion to collect these documents, their oddity, absurdity, and triflingness being generally considered to enhance their value. Nor is such an appreciation utterly groundless if we consider the nature of the greater part of these publications, intended to be merely temporary, and to express the passing excitements and agitations of the moment. Immediately after they have served their purpose they are useless; no one has an interest in preserving them, and they are easily and naturally destroyed. Hence any that may happen to survive and reappear in a different age and state of society are welcomed as curious and expressive memorials of the past, shewing 'the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure.' For instance, nothing will tell more emphatically the history of an election than those boasting or sarcastic announcements to the gaping crowd, which are so fugitive that they often do not last an hour, being spitefully destroyed by 'the other side,' or covered over by rival proclamations. A series of election placards of Sir Robert Walpole's day would be extremely interesting, as doubtless a like collection relating to our own age would be a century hence.

A history of placards might involve great investiga-

tion and learning, and afford a valuable chapter of the history of the human race. Before the invention of printing this form of announcement, by which one document could be read by many, must have been of great importance, as the only method, besides vocal utterance, by which news or statements could be rapidly made public. But in barbarous times the importance of the placard would necessarily be limited by the number of individuals able to read. Scripture furnishes many solemn instances of this kind of publication, and the student will remember Virgil's compliment to Augustus, affixed to his palace and claimed by Bathyllus, whom the poet so effectually exposed, by affixing some imperfect lines which the false appropriator could not complete. At later times in the same city, an endless succession of placards received the memorable name of *Pasquinades* or *Pasquils*, still used by literary collectors, and applied to whatever is short, witty, and severe. It seems to be considered essential to a pasquill that it should be malicious, and calculated to serve no good purpose. The origin of the term is curious. Near the Ursini Palace at Rome was the booth of a shoemaker, or, as he is sometimes termed, a tailor, named Pasquino. Centuries must have elapsed since he existed, as the writers at the commencement of the seventeenth century speak of his shop as a matter of tradition: that shop, it was said, had been a centre of wit and repartee—a place of idle, useless chat, as the moralists call it. It chanced that after Pasquino's death, a colossal but mutilated armed figure was dug up in the neighbourhood, and erected in a conspicuous place. It became a practice with the citizens who had written any bitter, personal gibes which they desired to publish anonymously, to write them out and paste them on the statue. Thus the fragment of statuary having become a silent communicator of the same kind of bitter wit which emanated from the tradesman's booth, succeeded to his name, and bore that name of 'Pasquino' so long, that its origin may be considered doubtful. The satires or lampoons were generally pasted on the statue during the night, and here, in the centre of papal authority, appeared some of the most bitter attacks on the reigning pontiffs: it was, indeed, the importance attributed to these that made the term *pasquinado* so celebrated.*

This leads us by association to another and more serious kind of placard which came to be levelled against the same quarter. The old universities of Europe were not, like our modern colleges, isolated bodies with separate regulations—they had a free interchange, a kind of masonic community, by which a person holding a position in one of them was admitted as a brother by all the others, and held his rank, whatever it might be, in each seat of learning. As the counterpart of such a uniformity—which perhaps could not have been carried out but for the general supremacy of the pope over all educational establishments—the student who claimed university distinctions had to stand his trial or examination in the face, as it were, of the whole republic of letters. He thus fixed a placard on the door of his college, challenging all comers to dispute certain points with him, which were set forth in Latin, in distinct portions or *theses*. The debate was conducted in the same language, and was often long and tedious; for in those days scholars spoke Latin, at least a species of it, as readily as their native tongue, and they were fully as fond of disputation as the learned of the present day. The disputant was entitled to certain hospitalities from the college, and in particular cases, if he shewed a certain amount of skill, to a pecuniary reward. It was through these disputations that the Admirable Crichton made his renowned sensation in the learned world. He was so perpetually placarding every church and college, however, with his

defying challenges, that he almost brought the practice into ridicule. It is commemorated, that a wit wrote under one of these boastful announcements—'And those who wish to see him may go to the Falcon Inn, where he will be exhibited alive.' This was the form in which the itinerant exhibitors of wild beasts invited people to their show, and it created considerable ridicule against Crichton.

In some places the practice of 'impugning,' as it was termed, lingered so long that Goldsmith profited by it in his continental wanderings. One body of lawyers in this country still keeps up the practice, and we have seen at the entrance-door of the court in which they practise the theses pasted up, challenging an argument. This sort of intellectual gladiatorship has, however, sadly degenerated; for we have been told that practically the individual who requires to go through the form of disputation, can get no one to be at the trouble of acting the part of antagonist unless he be provided with a counter argument fairly written out. Besides these ceremonial occasions, the practice of placarding theses at a university gate was a common one when any one wished to conduct an argument against all the learned world on some point of importance. The controversial spirit of the age got out in this form as it now does in newspapers and pamphlets. The hot-headed, ill-tempered, perverse disputative men of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries thus began and carried on their controversies. For instance, a Scotsman who had been ill used, as he believed, in his own country, thus made an attack on it, pasting his theses on the gate of a college at Oxford. His fate was somewhat memorable, as the act was construed into high treason, and he suffered death. It is far more important to notice that most of the great debates during the Reformation were conducted in this form. The reader of history will at once remember Luther's theses against the indulgences, pasted up in Wittenberg at the festival of All Saints.

We wonder if an actual original copy of this document be extant? We question it. In miscellaneous collections of broadsides, however, if they be a century or two old, one cannot help falling on very curious and interesting documents. Thus in a bundle before us, we take out and read one printed in black letter, as it was the fashion to print public documents in Britain in the seventeenth century. It is the proclamation by Charles I., adjourning the parliament of 1628, on account of the petition of rights, the attacks on his favourite the Duke of Buckingham, and the remonstrance against the tax of tonnage and poundage. To those who read the royal communications to parliament at the present day, the haughty, imperious tone of the document will seem startling. The king says:—

'It hath so happened, by the disobedient and seditious carriage of those said ill-affected persons of the House of Commons, that we and our royal authority and commandment have been so highly contemned, as our kingly office cannot bear, nor any former age can parallel; and therefore it is our full and absolute resolution to dissolve the same parliament; wherefore we thought good to give notice unto all the lords spiritual and temporal, and to the knights, citizens, and burgesses of this present parliament, and to all others whom it may concern, that they may depart about their needful affairs without attending any longer here. Nevertheless, we will that they, and all others should take notice, that we do, and ever will distinguish between those who have shewed good affection to religion and government, and those that have given themselves ever to faction, and to worke disturbance to the peace and good order of our kingdom.' Along with this comes 'a proclamation for suppressing of false rumours touching parliament,' against ill-disposed persons who have spread abroad false rumours, 'as if the scandalous and seditious proposition in the House

* See for a full account of Pasquin, No. 169 of this Journal.

of Commons, made by an outlawed man, desperate in mind and fortune, which was tumultuously taken up by some few after that by our royal authority we had commanded an adjournment, had been the vote of the whole House, whereas the contrary is the truth.'

The 'outlawed' or outlawed man is an allusion to John Pym, who afterwards hunted to the scaffold Strafford, the principal adviser of these arbitrary acts. It suggests many striking reflections to find in the same collection of scraps a broadside which appears to have been hawked through the streets of London, called 'Verses Written by Thomas Earle of Strafford a Little before his Death.' Though Strafford does not appear in Walpole's 'Royal and Noble Authors,' these verses, if they be genuine, might have given him a better title than many who are included in that work. We shall give the first three stanzas, which shew that the poem has a good deal of solemn eloquence:—

'Go, empty joys,
With all your noise,
And leave me here alone
In sweet, sad silence to bemoane
Your vain and fleet delight,
Whose danger none can see aright
Whilst your false splendour dims his sight.

Go, and insare,
With your false ware,
Some other ensie wight,
And cheat him with your flattering light;
Rain on his head a shower
Of human favour, wealth, and power—
Then snatch it from him in an hour.

Fill his big mind
With gallant wind
Of insolent applause:
Let him not fear all curbing laws,
Nor king nor people's frown,
But dreaune of something like a crown,
And, climbing towards it, tumble down.'

The placards during the progress of the Revolution—a bundle of which lies before us—must have been intensely exciting. Although there was no actual civil war, except what afterwards took place in Ireland and the Highlands, yet the wisest men of the day believed a conflict inevitable. There never was, perhaps, a period in history when there was more anxiety and smothered excitement. Hence one cannot touch these now mute and dusty announcements without remembering how they were at one time fraught with the deepest vital interest to the breathless crowds who read them. While James was still in his palace, and the Dutch prince with his army had been but faintly welcomed, a piece of paper, about the size of an ordinary letter, and intended perhaps for circulation among members of parliament and corporations, contains 'the proposals of the Right Honourable the Lords Hallifax, Nottingham, Godolphin, to the Prince of Orange.' This was a proposal from the king, intended to be popular, as it offered to call 'a free parliament.' In another mere slip of paper, such as porters hand to one in the street, is the prince's answer, also intended to be popular, and more successful, because more specific. He proposes that the two armies shall be kept at an equal distance from London, and that Tilbury Fort be put into the hands of the city. The next document is so dusty, stained, and worn as to be scarcely legible—it is the declaration of the association 'for the defence of the Protestant religion, and for maintaining the ancient government and the laws and liberties of England, Scotland, and Ireland.' It is brief but emphatic. It was, in fact, the announcement that the Whig party were prepared to support the prince's cause with arms in their hands, the announcement being contained in these threatening words: 'Whereas we are engaged in this common cause, under the protection of the Prince

of Orange, by which means his person may be exposed to dangers, and to the desperate and cursed attempts of papists and other bloody men: we do therefore solemnly engage, both to God and to one another, that if any such attempts are made upon him, we will pursue not only those who make them, but all their adherents, and all that we find in arms against us, with the utmost severities of a just revenge, to their ruin and destruction.'

At the conclusion of this emphatic denunciation comes an 'Advertisement.' Such as have not signed this association may do it at St James's (in the room formerly called the Duke of York's Council-Chamber) every day between the hours of ten and one in the forenoon and five and seven in the afternoon.' Thus the revolutionists were already in occupation of a chamber where the Stuart monarch had once presided. In a few days his heartless daughter was to be running through his palace, and estimating her new possessions. In the meantime a narrow slip of paper, the most important of all, signed 'Jo. Brown,' clerk of parliament, proclaims 'William and Mary, Prince and Princess of Orange, to be King and Queen of England, France, and Ireland, with all the dominions and territories thereto belonging.' Scotland, it will be observed, is not mentioned in this document: it was a separate independent kingdom, transacting its business in its own way, and its sovereignty could not be settled by the English parliament; but that body included Ireland as a dependency, and France because it was a mere sovereignty of pretence. The initial letter of this important document is decorated with two grinning apes, whose grimaces are at variance with its solemnity. It would almost seem as if the printer had been a Jacobite, who intended thus symbolically to put his tongue in his cheek while proclaiming the Revolution; but in reality he probably troubled himself no more about the placard than if it had related to Smithfield Market, and took the first type that came to hand.

A bundle of placards is likely to be as miscellaneous a collection as the contents of a pawnbroker's shop. The next we turn up is an advertisement of a highly-inflated character, by an individual named MackGregory. There is something interesting in the name itself, as it had evidently been adopted to avoid the penalties against using the surname of Macgregor. The Gregory family had adopted the same termination, dispensing, however, with the Highland patronymic, 'Mac.' It has been recorded that the father of Dr John Gregory was seriously disturbed in his philosophical retirement by Rob Roy Macgregor claiming relationship with him. The Mr MacGregory whose placard comes to hand had, it appears, desired, what is a very common object at the present day—to get some account of his wonderful qualifications to serve the public set forth in a newspaper, as a piece of information which it was important that the world should possess. What also frequently occurs where such modest requests are made, the editor to whom he applied—he of the 'Edinburgh Courant'—would only give his statement a place as an advertisement. Nay, even in that shape, he insisted on divesting it of its flowery decorations, and, as we shall presently see, this was not wonderful. Having, he tells us, sent 'some articles concerning his profession of geography and history and the languages, and the Couranteer having, out of a mistake, changed them, placed them among his advertisements, and by so doing spoiled the sense of them, Mr MackGregory himself has now ordered an advertisement of his own to be published, which gives an account of the nature of his profession,' &c. Mr MackGregory's account of himself is, that he is a licentiate of both laws, civil and canon, of the university of Angers. 'Having, since the Peace of Ryswick, at several courses travelled over all Europe, and over a part of Asia and Africa, as far as the river Euphrates, the Red Sea, and the Nile, and having had extraordinary occasions of seeing and ob-

serving everything remarkable both by land and sea, in the Orient as well as in the Occident, what remains of antiquity as well as what is modern; having lived at most of the courts of Europe, especially at that of France, and at those of Italy and Germany, and of late in Switzerland; having been employed in the public business, in managing and carrying on the confederate designs, and in traversing those of the two crowns, by virtue of a joint commission of resident at Basle for the ministers of the emperor, the queen of Great Britain, and the States-General.* He intimates that, having returned home, he intends to put the knowledge acquired in these important capacities to the humble duty of teaching. What he undertakes to teach might be briefly expressed as—everything. Mr MackGregory is not, however, a man of brevity. He is not content with laying down his qualifications in general heads—as history, geography, art, science, or the like—but he fills the several departments with an enumeration of everything, whether a large subject or the minutest matter, that his memory recalls to him. Thus in announcing his capacity to teach geography or topography he proceeds in this manner:—‘Exactly describing countries, situations, ports, mountains, valleys, hills, plains, woods, marshes, rivers, brooks, canals, sources, cataracts, mouths, lakes, channels, banks, seas, gulphs, straits, bays, harbours, shores; the coast of the Mediterranean, the channel of the Euxine, the roads of the Red Sea; climates, soils, products, riches, merchandise, money, forces, armies, fleets, ways of travelling, courses, roads, distances of places, land and water carriages, public offices, inns, entertainment prices, caravans, camels, provisions, catarages;† and so on in an endless jumble. This is about a fourth part only of the details enumerated under the head of geography. One can imagine what an affair it is to go over all knowledge in such a manner. Mr MackGregory must have had a very illogical mind—such as that of the man who is mentioned by the old logicians as dividing his library into books in divinity, folio, quarto, medicine, black-letter, Latin, vellum, and leather.

THE HINDOO FUNERAL.

SCENE.—A Grove near a Village. Three Old Men, one of whom is a Brahmin, are seated on a little rush-mat.

1st Old Man. Hark! what sounds of wailing!

2d Old Man. Ramdohâe! * I think our poor neighbour in yonder hut is dead or dying; she was seized yesterday forenoon with cholera.

Brahmin. That is the most dreadful scourge in the hands of Yama, the god of death.

1st O. M. Yes, Maharaj; who can fly from his unerring shafts? Are not our fates written upon our foreheads in black lines which no one can decipher?

2d O. M. I could scarcely sleep for the hooting of the owl last night; and my wife kept piously calling out ‘that she would cut off the witch’s nose, and beat her with a besom.’ It was of no use; on went the unearthly wail, as the foul creature called for her prey; and, Ramdohâe! if I did not see on yon niemba-tree two black carrion crows early this morning as I opened the door. They were holding dark counsel together, and devouring their hideous breakfast.

B. These are sure forerunners of death—birds of Sani, the god of time. The period of their life is a hundred years, and yet how few of them we see on this earth! These very birds were doubtless devouring their own offspring, as Sani himself does his children.†

1st O. M. God only can tell—but list how the poor women yonder are wailing; asking their mother why

she is dying; why she is going into another state of existence; and expressing their anxiety to know in what new form she will next wander about for her sins in the world.

2d O. M. Whether our neighbour be dead or dying, I must say that she was an exemplary wife during her life, and will surely go into a cow, an elephant, or some other clean thing. She could not become a suttee—although her husband died long since, before the pious custom was prohibited—because she was soon to become a mother for the second time. However, I saw her with her eldest boy—then five years old, and when she herself was about twenty—going round the pile upon which her lord’s body was laid, with averted face, her long graceful locks streaming in the wind. Ramdohâe! if she did not look like Devi herself. The poor little boy held the lighted brand, and gazed upon his pale mother, who was like a stricken deer. He strewed the asôoka blossoms, and at last set fire to the pile; but the prayer he could not say.

B. A beautiful one it is, addressed to the sacred fire:—‘Whether this mortal offended God or practised religion, transgressed knowingly or unknowingly, do thou by thy energy consume with the body all its sins, and bestow final happiness.’

2d O. M. There, the door of the hut opens; if it is not the doctor may I perish. Ramdohâe! how he is running and looking back, like a hunted jackal!

1st O. M. How you talk, Ramchunder! He is only afraid of being unclean for the day, and so is hurrying away before the patient expires. It would put Sumbô sadly out to be obliged to bathe and dress anew in clean clothes, now that he has so many sick upon his hands.

B. Yes, yes, you are right; for see, the dying woman is brought out. I shall just step aside, so as not to delay with my presence the pious business of the sons; for being their Gouroo, and a Brahmin, they would have to perform their prostrations. Do you two, therefore, advance and assist in the obsequies; and I shall come with flowers, sandalwood, khoosah-grass, and some sacred fire, as soon as I can.

Both Old Men. Nomoskâr, Maharaj, the two sons of the widow, are carrying her on the little bed—slowly and sadly they come.

Sons. [While the procession moves on, with invocations to the god of time and to Gunga.] Let us make a little more speed, that our mother may gaze upon the holy river, and have her feet immersed before she dies.

[They go on at a brisker pace, and speedily reach the river, where the bed is set down, and the invocations renewed. The Brahmin arrives shortly at the ground, and the two brothers, sons of the dying, prostrate themselves before their Gouroo, and put his right foot upon their necks.]

B. Arise, my sons. God has sent you a severe trial, but proceed in your duty; we cannot weep and lament like women. One of you must go off to the village and get what is necessary for the obsequies. We that stay behind will see the rest attended to.

The Sons go up to the bed. Ma! ma! (mother, mother), can you see? [She opens her eyes feebly.] Do you hear us? [She waves her hand gently.] Call upon Gunga—there are the rushing waters that wash away sins. [They raise the dying woman.] Say, ‘Gunga, save me!’ Oh, she cannot speak; let us lay her down on this clean mat, and strew it with khoosah-grass.

B. Make room for me. Place her feet in the water: death is almost upon her. I must anoint her with some holy clay out of Gunga’s bed, and sprinkle her with its water. Sallegrama and Tulsi are already beside her, also some sweet flowers. One of you must be going for the combustibles, as the day declines.

Elders Son. Brother, here are five rupees: hasten to the village; that money will get you everything.

Shortly the son returns with new clothing, earthen-pans, and the necessary offering of rice and pulse; and

* A religious exclamation; such as the Catholic ‘Our Lady!’
† Sani is the Hindoo Saturn.

two coolies bring loads of wood, consisting of two maunds (180 pounds' weight), together with ghee and rosin. Being of a lower caste, they retire to a distance to rest and look on. All this time the Brahmin has not been idle: the head of the dying has been sprinkled with river-water, and the hands and chest rubbed with mud, and portions of the 'Veda' have been chanted aloud.

Such is the scene that may be witnessed daily by any observant person, and was always watched with interest by the Old Indian. As soon as the sufferer is certainly dead, the body is washed and dressed according to its sex, and if of an affluent person, anointed with perfumes; the spot selected for the pile is swept clean, and a shallow drain is dug to allow a flow of moisture towards the river. The pile is then built, and ghee and rosin mixed with the wood and straw. The mouth of the dead body is now touched with money, and some eatables are offered. A clean new cloth is spread over the pile, and upon this the body is laid, with its head to the north: if a man, with his face towards the earth; if a woman, upwards. The cloth is then wound round it, and the nearest of kin takes a lighted brand, and with averted face repeats the short prayer already given; and while the mortal remains are consuming, such elegiac verses as these are recited from their holy writ, the Brahmin and followers walking solemnly round the flames:—

'Foolish is he who seeks for permanence in the human state—a state as insolid like the stem of the plantain-tree, transient like the foam of the ocean.'

'When a body formed of five elements, in order to receive the reward of deeds done in life, reverts to its five original principles, what room is there for regret?'

'The earth is perishable; the ocean, the gods themselves pass away; and how should that bubble, mortal man, escape destruction? All that is low must perish; all that is lofty must fall; all compound bodies must end in dissolution; all life must be concluded with death.'

When the body is consumed the ground is washed and the ashes carefully gathered. The affluent pay the boatman well who conveys these remains to the middle of the river to be thrown into deep water. The obsequies of the poorer classes are performed according to their means. The body is frequently only half-consumed; or sometimes it is, after the face has been merely burned with straw, launched into Gunga with a heavy stone round the waist, to furnish a revolting but common spectacle to the European when putrefaction comes on and the stone drops.

The funeral ended, all who have attended bathe and put on a clean dress at the expense of the mourners, and then return home and undergo a second purification at the doors of their houses by holding their hands to the fire and stepping over it. The mourning lasts forty days, and is concluded by a shraddho and liberal gifts to the poor. Unlucky is he deemed who has no descendant to light the pile: a son is preferred, but a daughter may also perform all the requisite formalities.

The prejudices of the Hindoo prohibit the treasuring of relics or keepsakes: no such thing is known among them as the precious lock cut off from the head of a much-loved child or a revered mother; everything that belonged to the departed is burned or given to the Parias and beggars, excepting the jewels or trinkets. In many instances these are distributed to their favoured Brahmins, or shared among the relatives, but they are not given or regarded as souvenirs. Let it not be supposed, however, that the heart of the Hindoo is unfeeling. Bitterly does a mother weep over her child, and with the deepest grief is the husband and parent consigned to the flames. Men, however, are silent and dignified in their sorrow: the women—always among the Hindoos more ignorant—the reverse; they beat

their breasts, tear their hair, and are loud in their wailing, manifesting their feelings, like children, by shrieks and tears.

'HOME TRUTHS.'

A LATELY published duodecimo, under the title of 'Home Truths for Home Peace, or "Muddle" Defeated,'* imparts a number of useful hints on the subject of domestic life, and rates pretty soundly those young housewives who, starting on false notions, contrive to make firesides uncomfortable and everybody about them miserable. 'Muddle' is the familiar term for disorder in all its branches, and no kind of Muddle is so offensive as that which prevails in ill-conducted households.

Very incredible things, we are told, take place in the properly muddled dwelling. Articles of a brittle nature are found to break in a manner singularly supernatural. 'Cups slip out of the maid's hands; and this, not when she has let them go, but whilst holding them "as tight as ever she could hold." Glasses, &c. are constantly falling off the edges of dressers and of tables, although declared by competent judges to have been far removed from such a dangerous position, so that they have evidently moved back again for the purpose of dashing themselves into a thousand shivers. Other articles of fragile materials, but less daring resolution, vary the monotony of their existence, and assert their right to tender consideration by "getting" such chips, cracks, and confusions as no rational person could ever venture to inflict. Nor are the harder and less sensitive portions of our household furniture innocent of similar offences: the locks, which, as fixtures, are secure from injury by falling, will nevertheless "get hampered"—stools "come unglued"—nails "work themselves out"—paint, varnish, &c. "rub off"—the best-made chairs will dislocate their arms—the strongest tables break or distort their legs—whilst other objects, too cowardly for self-inflictions, but equally perverse in spirit, will choose the very moment when their presence would be most desirable, to "get lost;" that is to say, to hide in some out-of-the-way corner, to which no living soul has ever had access, and in which consequently no member of the family would ever think of looking. I appeal to the general experience and phraseology of my countrywomen, as to the common occurrence of such household "facts," and the implied existence of those latent material energies which, as comprised in the personification "Nobody," are virtually acknowledged without a moment's hesitation.'

The young lady who conducts her affairs on the principle of Muddle has a fair opportunity of displaying her qualities in the matter of financiering. Her account-book is usually her memory, and a complicated book it is! When she has to square up some trifling disbursements with a domestic, the following count and reckoning probably ensues:—"Let me see, I gave you 10s. on Saturday and 9d. the day before. Was it 9d.? No: it must have been 11d., for I gave you a shilling and you gave me a penny out for the beggar; then there was 5s. 6d. on Monday, and 8d. you owed me from last month; and then the 1s. 6d. your master gave you for the parcel—you brought him 2d. back—and 8d. out of the butcher's bill; no, you had to give 3d. to the butcher, but you came to me for the 4d., and I had no coppers, so we still owe him the 4d.—by the way, don't forget to pay him the next time you go. Then there's the baker—no, I paid the baker myself, and I think the housemaid paid the buttermilk; but you got in the cheese the day before, and I have a sort of a recollection that I may possibly owe you for that, all but a few pence you must have had left of mine, that I told you to take from off the chimneypiece. Well, cook, I think that's nearly all! now, how do you

accounts stand?" This the poor cook, who is a cook and not a conjurer, finds it no easy matter to discover.

Time and patience will overcome all difficulties. Quite true, as a proposition; but we need to add the qualification—"always provided that one makes a reasonable effort to remove the said difficulties;" for it is undeniable that petty annoyances do not vanish of their own accord. Our author moralises on that wonderful amount of patience which leads some people to put up with daily annoyances which the outlay of a few shillings, or the exertion of a few minutes, would effectually remove. 'Narrow means, an inconvenient house, a disagreeable situation, tiresome children, stupid servants; or, worse than even these, toothache and an ill-tempered husband—these are trials for which patience is the best and almost only remedy; and all who have patience enough under such circumstances are entitled to our sympathy and admiration. But, in addition to the unavoidable afflictions of their lot, how many go on, from day to day and year to year, with doors that never shut, windows and drawers that nobody can open, keys that will not lock, grates that never draw, blinds that won't keep up, and curtains that won't come down—nails that tear their things, and things that tear their nails; and whilst professing to be above noticing such petty grievances, how many expend so much of their stock of patience upon these unnecessary evils, that they have scarcely any left for inevitable annoyances! Could such persons calculate, at the year's end, the amount of time and strength expended in daily struggles with only one drawer "that always sticks, so that there is the greatest difficulty in pulling it out; and when out, it is all that anybody can ever do to push it in again;" and if they could recollect and believe the singular verbal manifestations of their indifference to "these trifles that no one should make a moment's fuss about, in a world where there is so much real trouble," it is probable they would be quite as much surprised as those who have long wondered at the perversity which has cherished such needless causes of "botheration" to themselves and others. To ladies who do not perceive any harm in adding to the comforts and diminishing the inconveniences of our mortal life, I recommend the condensed philosophy of the following well-known but little heeded rhymes:—

"For every evil under the sun
There is a remedy, or there's none;
If there is one, try and find it;
If there is none, never mind it."

It does not escape this shrewd observer, that an excessive punctiliousness in keeping a house neat and orderly may give as much annoyance to visitors as the discomfort of untidiness. It is our own impression that some English housewives go beyond all proper bounds in this respect. Tying up every article of furniture in pinafores, they appear to consider that 'drawing-rooms' are toys to be looked at, not to be used. Of this species of vulgarity there are some graphic definitions. 'The only easy-looking chair is introduced to you as "one that nobody should sit upon;" another is recommended to your attention, as "one you are on no account to lean against." You are civilly requested "not to draw certain curtains," and rather uncivilly reminded "you should have let down certain blinds." A case is made for the cover of the embroidered ottoman, lest the dye of your garments should come off upon it; and, whilst the marks of other people's carelessness are exhibited for your instruction and construction, you contemplate the face of the polished mahogany of your appointed washstand in helpless embarrassment, how ever you shall wash your own. In a word, you are expected, like every other inmate of the dwelling, to exist solely in reference to the excessive order and cleanliness around you; and every energy of your mind,

at every moment of the day, must be exerted over every energy and movement of your body, to avoid your doing mischief or giving offence continually.

'I appeal to all who have experience in the state of things alluded to, whether the feeling of disorder and confusion was not produced in them by the very precautions used for their perpetual banishment! A confusion worse than any mere material confusion can be—a confusion of ideas and principles, of fears and fidgets, of pleasures and of pains, of luxuries and lumber; an undistinguishable mixture of venial oversights and unpardonable transgressions, low seats and high treason, large rooms and little minds, sweet portraits and sour faces, whole china and cracked tempers; besides the ever-recurring puzzle, as to whether people were living in a house or for a house; or whether the things, about which such a coil is made, do really belong to their *soi-disant* possessors, or the individuals who claim for them such attention and respect, are merely *belongings of their things*. . . . And, after all, what is the end obtained by this perpetual care and sorrow? The depriving everything about us of its lawful use, and consequently of its real value; the establishment and practice of an idolatry that the veriest heathen might be ashamed of. . . . Of all the Muddles that bring misery and ruin in their train, defend me from the love-destroying and comfort-killing Muddle of inexorable cleanliness and order!

The detestable meanness of living beyond honestly-earned and available resources is very properly included among the common errors of domestic life; and of this species of dishonesty there is the more reason to speak plainly, as it is too frequently practised by individuals who assume airs of superiority, and are the veriest bigots in matters of religious concern. We shall, therefore, conclude our notice of this clever little volume with a quotation on the subject of wantonly-incurred debt.

'What comparison is there, in fact, between the guilt of the poor uneducated wretch who ventures, in rags and misery, to steal from the apparent superfluities of his neighbour a portion for his starving family, and the crime of the well-fed, well-dressed, much-accomplished lady, who sails into the shop of the unwary tradesman for articles of useless luxury, and under cover of the respectability of her appearance and the address she gives, "defrauds him of property to a considerable amount?" The ragged culprit is watched and driven from the window—the fashionable thief is welcomed in complacently and bowed out gratefully, with the promise that "her esteemed orders shall be attended to immediately." When the goods she has nominally purchased are sent home, and they, like their real owner, are readily taken in, the grand piano is perhaps heard in her elegantly-furnished villa, or the carriage of some wealthier friend is standing at the door. The lady's place in church and in society is gaily filled, and for a certain, or rather an uncertain period, the custom and company of "such a highly respectable family" are considered an acquisition in the neighbourhood. But a change comes over the spirit of the dream: in course of time the lady who ordered with the greatest ease, is discovered to pay with the greatest difficulty, and her commands are not so much esteemed as formerly. The dishonest beggar, if detected, is committed to prison; but when things come to a crash with the fashionable thief, the lady's husband is simply declared "unfortunate;" and if forced to remove into a humbler dwelling, in a district in which she is not known, the lady is at liberty to pursue her former practices of shop-lifting as far as circumstances will allow! Alas for the rottenness of the state in which such things are not only possible but common! What a false, what a fatal standard of respectability is that which allows individuals who have lost their credit with the poorest shopkeeper, to

mix with unblushing confidence in what each quarter terms its "best society!" This carelessness in regard to debt is one of the most deadly evils in the world, and, like all such, it has its rise from small beginnings of practical error, and from a great and important deficiency in the fundamental principles of moral conduct. . . . The whole court-calendar does not contain a title conferring so much real dignity, and so many substantial privileges, as that of "A PERSON TO BE TRUSTED."

FIBROUS SUBSTANCES APPLICABLE TO MANUFACTURES.

We have seen a specimen of the fibrous substance of a plant growing wild in our Indian possessions, and which may be had in any quantity. It has not been in this country before. The fibre is long, soft, tough, and silky. We have also received a specimen of the fibres of another East Indian production, of a finer description, which might probably be converted into a new and useful material for weaving fancy stuffs of a mixed kind, such as those made at Bradford. We understand that one or two bales of the latter production have reached this country, and are for sale. In the Great Exhibition there are several fibrous substances well worthy the inspection of manufacturers. Amongst the contributions from Ceylon, west from the transept, will be found a number of these, all more or less adapted for being spun into yarn. In the contributions from Spain will be found a beautifully-fine embroidered dress made from the fibre of the pine-apple, with the inscription: 'This dress is made entirely from yarn spun from the fibre of the pine-apple, and embroidered by hand, by Signora Margrita of Manilla.' The texture of the cloth is wonderfully fine and even, and of a beautiful white. In the China department are several specimens of long China flax or grass, with the thread spun from the same, of great evenness, and very fine; along with several pieces of cloth, bleached and unbleached, as fine as cambric. In the section Spain will also be found samples of Spanish flax and hemp, not well enough dressed for spinning purposes, but still serviceable for paper-making. In this department, too, is a most interesting specimen of the inner skin (of great size and texture) of a tree from the island of Cuba. It is called 'lace-rind,' and consists of the finest fibrous filaments arranged like network. The article alluded to will be found numbered 284 in the Spanish section, and is exhibited by M. de Ysasi. The Botanical Museum at the Kew Gardens, to which the admittance is free, contains some beautiful and curious specimens of fibrous substances from a number of plants imported from various foreign countries. Among these will be found the fibre of the *bromelia*, used in the Isthmus of Panama by the shoemakers for making shoe-thread; a fibre used for making nets in New Granada; *Crotalaria juncia*, a vegetable fibre, imported from Bombay and Ceylon, with specimens of very fine fishing-tackle made from it, almost as lustrous and transparent as glass, as well as many other specimens of vegetable fibres well worthy of careful examination. These are all to be seen in the upper gallery of the museum. To printers, designers, shawl-weavers, and others, the beautiful collection of prints, and copies of rare and curious exotic plants and flowers contained in the same museum, will afford an almost inexhaustible source of study, tending to improve their taste and advance them in their profession.—*Abridged from the Manchester Examiner and Times.*

THE ACTINIA.

It is a powerful, fearless, and voracious creature, readily grasping small fishes, fierce crustacea, worms, leeches, and soft testacea; and endeavouring to gorge itself with thrice the quantity of food its most capacious stomach is capable of receiving. Two or three days after a mussel has been swallowed entire, the shell has been rejected quite empty. It is endowed with a very slow locomotive faculty, rarely exercised. At Blackness Castle, as well as here at Newhall's Point, the *Actinia cerasum*,

or cherry actinia, occurs affixed to stones of moderate size. It is of a fine red colour, sometimes the richest vermilion, the tubercles like so many beautiful pearls of the purest white; and when expanded (in the water of course), it resembles a brilliant flower unfolded to enjoy the sunshine. When contracted, it is like a fine ripe cherry. One specimen, taken in 1805, survived six years, and produced young. Another produced a monstrosity, like the Siamese twins—two bodies of pale-green, united by the middle, the general progeny being red; and this youngster continued producing afterwards, litter after litter, of sixty, forty-three, &c., green ones—the actinia being hermaphrodite. When about six years old the vessel had been too much replenished, one of the bodies rose over the edge, the connecting flesh was twisted and rent asunder. Both bodies adhered again to the base; one was accidentally lost, but the other continued to survive and to breed pale-green, although it diminished in size after the separation.—*Fyfe's Summer Life on Land and Water.*

A RHYME ABOUT BIRDS.

I said to the little Swallow:

'Who'll follow!

Out of thy nest in the eaves

Under the ivy leaves!

Yet my thought flies swifter than thou:

My thought has a softer nest,

Where it folds its wing to rest,

In a pure-hearted woman's breast;

While its sky is her cloudless brow.'

Swallow—swallow,

Who'll follow!

I said to the brown, brown Thrush:

'Hush—hush!

Through the wood's full strains I hear

Thy monotone deep and clear,

Like a sound amid sounds most fine;

And so, though the whole world sung

To my love with eloquent tongue,

However their voices rung,

She would pause and listen to mine.'

Brown, brown thrush,

Hush—hush!

I said to the Nightingale:

'Hail, all hail!

Pierce with thy trill the dark,

Like a glittering music-spark,

When the earth grows pale and dumb;

But mine be a song more rare,

To startle the sleeping air,

And to the dull world declare

Love sings amid darkest gloom.'

Nightingale,

Hail, all hail!

I said to the sky-poised Lark:

'Hark—hark!

Thy note is more loud and free,

Because there lies safe for thee

A little nest on the ground.

And I, when strong-winged I rise

To chant out sweet melodies,

Shall know there are home-lit eyes

Watching me soar, sun-crowned.'

Poet-lark,

Hark—hark!

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